



International Bureau

Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554

Accepted / Filed

MAR 2 - 2016

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

January 13, 2016

The Honorable Tom Graves
United States House of Representatives
702 South Thornton Avenue
Dalton, GA 30720

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Dear Congressman Graves:

Thank you for your letter regarding the Commission's implementation of new satellite uplink identification requirements. The concerns raised by your constituent are important to us and are being considered as part of our continuing assessment of the impact of this rule.

By way of background, since March 1, 1991, the Commission has required operators of satellite video uplinks to include in their transmissions an identifying message. This identifier is used by satellite operators receiving the transmissions to quickly identify and address sources of interference, especially those that require rapid resolution because the interference is preventing other companies from using the satellite spectrum for which they have paid.¹

In August 2013, the Commission updated this requirement to comport with technological developments.² Under the new rule that applies to digital video transmissions, operators of satellite news gathering vehicles, and similar equipment, must transmit an identifying message in accordance with a uniform technical standard developed by the satellite industry and included in the record of that rulemaking proceeding.³

The Commission afforded operators a two-year grace period to comply with the new identification rule.⁴ This grace period was based on the record developed in the proceeding, including evidence that newer equipment could be upgraded, without needing to be replaced, in order to meet the requirement.

Market developments since adoption of the *Order* indicate that certain types of equipment, including the kind used by your constituent Mr. Chastain, cannot be upgraded to satisfy the new identification requirement and must be replaced at great expense. We are examining whether relief may

¹ See generally Robert Ames, Satellite Interference – What It Means for Your Bottom Line at 1, <http://www.integ.com/is3/whitepapers/sktelecommnews.pdf> (noting satellite operators incur costs of “millions of dollars per year due to satellite interference”).

² *Comprehensive Review of Licensing and Operating Rules for Satellite Services*, IB Docket No. 12-267, 28 FCC Rcd 12403, 12466-70, paras. 203-20 (2013) (*Order*).

³ 47 C.F.R. § 25.281(b).

⁴ *Order*, 28 FCC Rcd at 12470, para. 220. The two-year grace period ends September 3, 2016. The Commission will soon publish a document in the Federal Register correcting Section 25.281(b) to specify this starting date, rather than June 1, 2016, as in the current text.

No. of Copies rec'd
List ABCDE

041

Page 2—The Honorable Tom Graves

be appropriate for operators of such types of equipment in light of these greater than expected costs and expect to provide additional guidance in advance of the September 3, 2016 deadline.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mindel De La Torre". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mindel" being the most prominent.

Mindel De La Torre
Chief, International Bureau